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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CAMPAIGN TO OUST PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN,
U.S. ARMS PROCUREMENTS

¶1. Summary: Taiwan major Chinese-language dailies gave significant coverage September 15 to the planned high-profile parade launched by the "Oust Bian" campaign to "besiege" the Presidential Office and Residence Friday evening; and a mass "Formosa Sunrise" rally planned by the Taiwan Society on September 16 on Ketagalan Boulevard in support of democracy and stability in Taiwan. Most papers expressed grave concerns over possible clashes that might erupt between the pro- and anti-Chen protesters this evening and tomorrow. Both the pro-status quo "China Times" and pro-unification "United Daily News" front-paged the "siege" slated for this evening, while the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, ran a front-page banner headline that read "Siege versus Supporting Taiwan: Su Tseng-chang, Ma Ying-jeou Both Call for Peace and Rationality."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "Liberty Times" editorial called for peace between the pro- and anti-Chen rallies, saying violence will only turn Taiwan into "terror governance." A "United Daily News" analysis, however, said the fact that only one out of the four DPP heavyweights plans to show up at the pro-Chen rally tomorrow is, to a certain extent, a manifestation of the current predicament facing the DPP and President Chen Shui-bian. With regard to the U.S.-Taiwan arms deal, an opinion piece in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" said that Taiwan is "at a security crossroads, and further procrastination in arms procurement could threaten its very existence." End summary.

¶3. Campaign to Oust President Chen Shui-bian

A) "Violence Will Turn Taiwan into Terror Governance"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] editorialized (9/15):

"... Today, even though the political stances of those who want to oust Bian and those who support Taiwan may be poles apart, opposition to violence and adherence to the rule of law should be a common factor shared by every person. Whether Taiwan's democracy is moving toward maturity or going backwards depends on whether the public wants to choose peace or violence. We hope that all political figures should have a sense of responsibility and should firmly say no to violence, leaving no room for violence to exist on the island. Should this be the case, no matter how passionate a mass movement gets, the shadow of violence will not turn Taiwan's democracy and rule of law into terror governance."

B) "Drawing a Line [between Themselves] and Bian? Four Heavyweights in Green Camp Awaiting Prosecutors' Findings"

Journalist Sean Liu noted in an analysis in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (9/15):

"Given the proactive promotion of the Presidential Office, the DPP Central Standing Committee decided to launch an all-out mobilization of its supporters to participate in the anti-Oust Bian movement on Ketagalan Boulevard on September 16. But the 'four DPP heavyweights' each has his own plan; only DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun will show up at the rally tomorrow. Such a development, to a certain extent, reflected the predicament now facing the DPP and Chen Shui-bian. ...

"It is because they are unsure of whether Chen is really clean that the four DPP heavyweights each has his own calculation; none wants to make his stance too plain and harm his own political career. Among the four, Su Tseng-chang, who now has the upper hand, tried to avoid lashing out at those people who want to oust Bian, in an attempt to show his tolerance as the highest administrative chief and to win recognition from both the Blue and Green supporters. ...

Frank Hsieh, the DPP candidate for the Taipei mayoral race, is also aware that he has to win the mayoral election first so as to be able to move up a step in 2008. Given the voters' formation in Taipei and, in particular, the solid gathering of people joining in the sit-in over the past few days, Hsieh has more or less realized the neutral voters' strong anti-graft appeals. He thus chose to 'focus his attention on city administrative issues' so as to prevent himself from being dragged into the confrontations between those who want to oust Bian and those who oppose the 'Oust Bian' campaign.

"Annette Lu, on the other hand, is facing more factors that she needs to consider. She always regards herself as a clean political figure and in private, and she has never hidden her displeasure toward the misdeeds of the First Family. Besides, once the movement to oust Bian succeeds, Lu, in the capacity of a vice president, will be the first beneficiary. Lu naturally has expectations for the post-Bian era, but given the fact that the DPP is generally afraid of the political situation that would follow her succession to Chen, Lu's every move is under close scrutiny now and is under strong

criticism by her fellow party members. ... DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun, on the other hand, has no choice but to show strong support of Bian without any hesitation. ... The four heavyweights are all taking a wait-and-see attitude. They may very likely make a big action to draw a clear line between themselves and Bian once the High Court Prosecutor's Office verifies that Bian has indeed violated the law and is even involved in corruption."

14. U.S. Arms Procurements

"The Real Threat to Taiwan's Security"

Tu Ho-ting, a Taipei-based journalist and analyst, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (9/15):

"Following the government's proposed budget for procuring 66 F-16 C/D fighter jets from the US last month, the question of national defense - the victim of partisan squabbling over the past two years - is once again the focus of public attention. But, sadly, Taiwan's security situation is still gloomy, and its implications are seriously underestimated. ... With the serious security challenges facing Taiwan and the US strongly critical of Taiwan's laxness regarding its own defense, it is surprising that KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou's claim that his party's repeated blocking of the arms bill is not only reasonable but is winning US respect for Taiwan's prudent attitude on the arms procurement issue. Furthermore, Ma solemnly argues that the KMT only supports 'reasonable arms purchases,' which means the purchased weapons should meet Taiwan's defense need; its budget should not be a financial burden on the government; and all citizens should support the arms purchase.

"Ironically, these plausible arguments could soon become empty words. According to the latest reports, under pressure from the US, Ma has implied that the KMT will dramatically change its position on the long-delayed arms procurement bill when the new legislative session begins this month. If this is the case, what the KMT did over the past two years would prove to have been a politically motivated farce at the expense of Taiwan's security. The nation is

at a security crossroads, and further procrastination in arms procurement could threaten its very existence. Although it is still too early to say whether the arms bill will be passed or not, it will be the opposition's last chance to decide whether they want to improve Taiwan's defense capabilities."

YOUNG